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NATIONAL VOLUNTEER WEEK

April 27–May 3

—see “*Volunteerism
Creates Community
Vitality*” on page 10



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Proper Yard Waste Management Helps Reduce Storm Water Pollution

By Don Janssen, UNL Extension Educator
and Tadd Barrow, UNL Extension Educator

Organic materials are found everywhere in the outdoor environment. Plants grow and plants die. It is the cycle of life. Nutrients such as phosphorus and nitrogen are concentrated within the plant tissue, and through the process of decay are redistributed back to the environment after its death. Once released, these nutrients are available for uptake by other plants.

How then does organic yard waste become a contaminant for streams and lakes? Rain or melting snow in urban communities flows across lawns or impervious surfaces like roof tops, paved areas and bare soil. As it flows, this runoff water transports sediments, leaves, grass clippings, litter and other landscape wastes into streets and gutters that lead to storm sewers. Unlike household waste water, storm sewer runoff water receives almost no treatment, thus any particle or nutrient that enters the storm sewer will likely end up in a stream or lake.

The problem is, in lakes and streams, excess nutrients encourage algae and rooted plant growth. An over abundance of algae in a water body can lead to oxygen depletions, fish kills, strong odors, toxin production, unsightly surface scums and reduced recreational opportunities. Rooted aquatic plants in overabundance can clog boat props, hamper fishing, foul swimming beaches and limit fish growth. Although, plant material and nutrients gradually accumulate in lakes and streams, a neighborhood or community with improperly managed yard waste practices can be a significant contributor of excess amounts of nutrients and cause unnecessary degradation of lakes and streams.

Sources of yard and landscape waste include grass clippings, leaves, tree and shrub trimmings, organic mulch and plant materials from vegetable and flower gardens. By weight, grass is the biggest component of yard waste, averaging half of all yard waste. Leaves and brush each provide nearly one-quarter. Other landscape wastes contribute less than ten percent. On the average nearly 200 pounds of yard waste is produced per person each year.

Controlling organic waste and the potential pollution of storm water can be achieved several ways. One way to control landscape waste is through source reduction. Grasscycling and backyard composting combined, reduce most landscape waste in the waste stream.

Grasscycling

Grasscycling is the natural recycling of grass clippings by leaving them on the lawn when mowed. Leaving the clippings on the lawn saves time, money and protects the environment. Mowing time is reduced since bagging and disposal is eliminated. The clippings add beneficial organic matter and nutrients to the soil. This in turn reduces fertilizer and water needs, which can minimize nutrient runoff entering storm drains.



Grasscycling recycles grass clippings by leaving them on the lawn when mowed. Mulching mowers (such as the one pictured) can be used.

Grasscycling can be practiced on any lawn as long as some simple turf management guidelines are followed. Proper mowing is required. Cut grass when the surface is dry and keep mower blades sharp. Follow the “1/3 rule.” Mow the lawn often enough so no more than 1/3 of the grass blade length is removed in any one mowing. This will produce short clippings that will filter back into the turf. Mulching mowers can be used if blade lengths are longer than 1-inch in length. Raising the mower height in summer encourages deeper roots and protects the turf from heat stress. Always sweep clipping on sidewalks and driveways back onto the lawn.

Most cool season turfgrasses need one-inch of water per week during the growing season. Lawns watered too frequently develop shallow root systems. Over-watering causes lawns to grow faster and require more frequent mowing.

Proper fertilization maintains a healthy lawn without excessive growth. For moderate, even growth, use a combination of quick release and slow release nitrogen fertilizers. Rates and timing depend on the grass species. It is better to apply smaller quantities of fertilizer more frequently rather than large amounts less frequently. Leaving grass clippings on the lawn can supplement up to 25% of the lawn’s yearly fertilizer needs reducing the amount of money spent on fertilizer. Grasscycling the clippings add nutrients to the lawn with each mowing.

Composting

Composting grass clippings, leaves and garden debris create a humus soil amendment used for potting plants and turf or garden soils. Compost added to heavy clay soils improves water penetration and drainage by improving soil structure. Compost absorbs water and improves the water holding capacity of sandy soils. To conserve moisture it is essential to have soil with good water retention. In addition to improving soil structure, decomposing compost will slowly release plant nutrients.

The predominant organic wastes in backyard compost piles are leaves and grass clippings. Branches and twigs greater than 1/4 inch in diameter should be put through a shredder/chipper or cut up prior to placement in the compost pile. Plant kitchen wastes may also be added.

To be successful in composting follow



Composting turns yard waste such as grass and leaves (pictured at left) into a beneficial soil amendment (at right).



Mulches made from yard waste such as grass or chipped wood (wood chips pictured above) reduce weed growth and rate of evaporation around plants.

these simple guidelines. First, a compost pile should be large enough to hold heat and small enough to admit air to its center. The minimum dimension should be 3 feet by 3 feet by 3 feet to hold heat. The maximum to allow air to the center of the pile is 5 feet by 5 feet by 5 feet.

Microorganisms (bacteria, fungi, actinomycetes, etc,) which decompose the organic wastes need to have the organic molecules dissolved in water. A moisture content of 40–60 percent provides adequate water without limiting aeration. The material should feel damp to the touch, with just a drop or two of liquid being released when it is tightly squeezed in the hand.

Mix equal units by weight of green fresh yard wastes with brown dry yard wastes. (The browns need to be saturated with water.) Mix thoroughly before placing them in the bin. Continue mixing greens and browns until the bin is full. Add a little soil or finished compost as an activator as the organic wastes are mixed.

For a passive compost pile, nothing more needs to be done. After a year the composting process should be finished and the compost can be used in the landscape.

For an active compost pile, maintenance will involve turning or mixing the pile and adding water to keep the composting process active. An active compost pile will create a temperature of 110–140 degrees F in its center. When the temperature decreases, mix the pile again. The compost will be finished when the pile cools and decreases to about one-third its original volume. It will be dark, crumbly and have an earthy odor.

Mulching

Tree and shrub trimmings are another source of yard waste. These materials are a greater challenge since they are woody and

see **MULCHING** on page 3

Rental Arrangements Changing with the Times

Part 2 — Flexible Cash Leases

Tom Dorn
UNL Extension Educator

The March NEBLINE Farm Views page featured an article describing traditional cash and crop-share leases. In this issue of the NEBLINE, we will discuss “flexible” cash leases, why landowners are starting to develop flexible leases and how flexible leases work.

The March NEBLINE article delineated some of the reasons why tenants have been showing a preference for cash leases over crop share leases in recent years. A brief summary is:

- Greater management flexibility.
- Greater capture of returns for the tenant for their management abilities.
- Greater opportunity to compete in rental land market.

Reasons given in the March article for landlords showing a preference for cash leases included:

- Less management responsibility because the landlord does not pay for any of the crop inputs.
- Landowners receive their payment in cash. This eliminates the need to sell crop to receive their income for the year as in the case of crop share leases.
- Income for the year is known up-front so the landowner takes no production or price risk.
- In the past 10–15 years, cash leases have often resulted in greater returns for the landowner than crop share leases.

The net result of these developments is traditional leases may no longer represent an equitable business arrangement between the two business partners, (landowner and tenant). This has prompted some landowners to develop flexible cash leases. Flexible cash leases return to the concept of having the landowner share some of the production and/or market price risks. This can open up possibilities for the landowner to realize higher returns if total crop revenues are higher than expected but will result in lower returns for the landowner in down years.

Flexible Lease Provisions

In the leasing workshop, Dr. Bruce Johnson listed the advantages of flexible cash leases as:

- Actual rent paid adjusts automatically to yield and/or price shifts.
- Risks, up-side and down-side, are shared.
- Owners are paid in cash, not crop.
- Reduced need for frequent re-negotiation.

He listed disadvantages to flexible cash leases as:

- There is no universal model for how a flexible cash lease is written.
- If the rental rate is flexed on yield risk, then direct and counter-cyclical payments must be shared by tenant and landlord.
- Lease detail is needed for determining flex mechanism.
- Since flexible leases are based on crop

Parameters

If cash rent is going to change with gross revenue, a key parameter is what percentage of the gross revenue has gone to the land owner under traditional cash rental agreements. Dr. Johnson calculated the average cash rent as a percentage of gross revenue for center pivot irrigated corn and soybeans and for rain fed (dryland) wheat, corn and soybeans in eastern Nebraska for the period 2003-2007. He found the average rain fed (dryland) cash rent was 33% of gross revenue for corn, 37% of gross revenue for soybeans, and 50% of gross revenue for wheat. The average center pivot irrigated cash rent for the five year period was 34% of gross revenue for corn and 42% of gross revenue for irrigated soybeans. We will use 35% of gross revenue as the factor to adjust cash rents in the two example flexible irrigated leases in this article.

Option 1. Flex on commodity price - yield assumed to be constant

Assumptions (as negotiated between the two parties) are:

- yield set at 200 bushels per acre
- base rent of \$175 per acre
- base revenue 200 bushels x \$3 = \$600 per acre

- flex rent: 35% of gross revenue above or below base revenue
- Table 2 shows the total rent (base + / - bonus) over a range of prices with yield set at 200 bushels per acre.

Option 2. Flex on commodity price and actual yield

Assumptions (as negotiated between the two parties) are:

- 200 bushels per acre average yield
- base rent of \$175 per acre
- base revenue 200 bushels x \$3 = \$600 per acre
- flex rent: 35% of gross revenue above or below base revenue

Table 3 is figured on actual yield and price. Base rent is \$175 per acre based on 200 bushels per acre and \$3 per bushel = \$600 gross revenue.

Caution: As this is being written, the new 2008 Farm Bill has not been passed by congress. It is likely flexible rental agreements which set rental price on bushels of crop raised, will be treated as a crop share arrangement necessitating the FSA to split the Direct and Counter-cyclical payments between the landowner and tenant. The percentage of the payments going to each party will depend on the circumstances of the lease.

Table 1. Changes in Nebraska Land Value and Cash Rents 2002–2007

Region and Land Type	Percent Change in Average Values	Percent Change in Cash Rents
EAST: Nance, Platte, Colfax, Dodge, Washington, Merrick, Polk, Butler, Saunders, Douglas, Sarpy, Hamilton, York, Seward, Lancaster, Cass		
Dryland Cropland	71%	30%
Center Pivot Irrigation	52%	21%
Gravity Irrigation	45%	18%
SOUTHEAST: Clay, Fillmore, Saline, Otoe, Johnson, Nemaha, Nuckolls, Thayer, Jefferson, Gage, Pawnee, Richardson		
Dryland Cropland	80%	35%
Center Pivot Irrigation	56%	25%
Non-Tillable Grazing	50%	20%

Table 1 shows the average increase in land values versus the increase in cash rents paid for the five-year period of 2002–2007. *This information was presented in a recent leasing workshop by Dr. Bruce Johnson, professor of Agricultural Economics at UNL.*

As can be seen, the average increase in cash rents has lagged behind increases in land value during the five-year period. The “fair” rate of return on the investment in land value constitutes an opportunity cost which is borne by the landowner. An unavoidable, out-of-pocket cost is the property tax, which is also based on land value. As this data shows, on average, the return on investment is not as favorable as it was at the beginning of the five-year period, since cash rents have not kept pace with increasing land values.

Commodity prices on average increased dramatically during the period 2002–2008. Landowners understandably want their share of the bounty resulting from higher commodity prices. Tenants, on the other hand, will argue one must consider the net return, not the gross return, when computing a fair rental rate. Increased commodity prices have been accompanied by large increases in the cost of energy, seed, fertilizer, pesticides, machinery and labor. As one farmer told me, “It ain’t all gravy.”

revenues but not crop input costs, they can get out-of-sync if input costs shift rapidly.

Verification is Needed with Flexible Rental Agreements

Yield may be determined by:

- scale tickets
- combine yield monitors
- storage bin capacity, *if the crop is stored on-farm.*

Price may be determined by:

- The price at a local elevator or other buyer near the date the final rent payment is due.
- Local cash price at a co-op or processor on a specified date or an average price over a specified period.
- Futures market price minus normal basis value for the location.

Key Variables the Landowner and Tenant Should Agree On

- crop rotation
- base rent
- yield and price for establishing base revenue
- landowner percentage if gross revenue above or below base revenue to “flex” base rent

Table 2. Flexible Irrigated Corn Lease

Yield held constant at 200 bushel. Base price \$3 per bushel. Base gross revenue = \$600 per acre. Base rent=\$175/acre. Bonus = 35% of gross over or under \$600.

Corn price Dec. 1	Base rent \$/ac	Gross revenue at 200 bu/ac	Gross revenue less base revenue	Bonus (35% of difference)	Total rent base + bonus
\$2.50	\$175	\$500	(\$100)	-\$35	\$140
\$2.75	\$175	\$550	(\$50)	-\$17.50	\$158
\$3.00	\$175	\$600	\$0	\$0	\$175
\$3.25	\$175	\$650	\$50	\$17.50	\$193
\$3.50	\$175	\$700	\$100	\$35.00	\$210
\$3.75	\$175	\$750	\$150	\$52.50	\$228
\$4.00	\$175	\$800	\$200	\$70.00	\$245
\$4.25	\$175	\$850	\$250	\$87.50	\$263
\$4.50	\$175	\$900	\$300	\$105.00	\$280
\$4.75	\$175	\$950	\$350	\$122.50	\$298
\$5.00	\$175	\$1000	\$400	\$140.00	\$315
\$5.25	\$175	\$1050	\$450	\$157.50	\$333
\$5.50	\$175	\$1100	\$500	\$175.00	\$350

Table 3. Flexible Irrigated Corn Lease

Flexed on actual gross revenue (actual yield x price)
Base rent = \$175 per acre. Bonus = 35% of gross revenue over or under \$600.

Corn price Dec. 1	Base rent \$/ac	Yield bu/acre	Gross revenue bu/ac x price	Gross revenue - base revenue	Bonus (35% of difference)	Total rent base + bonus
\$2.50	\$175	180	\$450	(\$150)	-\$52.50	\$122.50
\$2.50	\$175	200	\$500	(\$100)	-\$35	\$140
\$2.50	\$175	220	\$550	(\$50)	-\$17.50	\$157.50
\$3.00	\$175	180	\$540	(\$60)	-\$21	\$154
\$3.00	\$175	200	\$600	\$0	\$0	\$175
\$3.00	\$175	220	\$660	\$60	\$21	\$196
\$3.50	\$175	180	\$630	\$30	\$10.50	\$185.50
\$3.50	\$175	200	\$700	\$100	\$35	\$210
\$3.50	\$175	220	\$770	\$170	\$59.50	\$234.50
\$4.00	\$175	180	\$720	\$120	\$42	\$217
\$4.00	\$175	200	\$800	\$200	\$70	\$245
\$4.00	\$175	220	\$880	\$280	\$98	\$273
\$4.50	\$175	180	\$810	\$210	\$73.50	\$248.50
\$4.50	\$175	200	\$900	\$300	\$105	\$280
\$4.50	\$175	220	\$990	\$390	\$136.50	\$311.50
\$5.00	\$175	180	\$900	\$300	\$105	\$280
\$5.00	\$175	200	\$1000	\$400	\$140	\$315
\$5.00	\$175	220	\$1100	\$500	\$175	\$350
\$5.50	\$175	180	\$990	\$390	\$136.50	\$311.50
\$5.50	\$175	200	\$1100	\$500	\$175	\$350
\$5.50	\$175	220	\$1210	\$610	\$213.50	\$388.50

Mulching

continued from page 1

quite resistant to decay. These materials need to be shredded or chipped for quicker decomposition and to reduce waste volume. Various shredders and chippers are available to home owners for purchase or rent.

Shredded branches may be used in the compost pile but they will require a longer time for decomposition. They are best use for mulch.

Using an organic mulch can help gardens in many ways. Mulches reduce weeds by making conditions unfavorable for weed germination and growth. Mulches also maintain uniform moisture conditions in gardens.

Water loss through evaporation is decreased and soil erosion is decreased by reducing the impact of heavy rainfall. Soil temperatures are modified by mulches. Last but not least organic mulches add nutrients and humus to the soil as they decompose.

A two-inch layer of grass clippings provides good weed control. Build up the layer gradually, using dry grass. A thick layer of green grass will give off excessive heat and foul odors.

A layer of leaves, 2- to 3-inches thick after compaction, provides annual weed control. Leaves will decompose fairly quickly, are attractive as a mulch and improves the soil. Leaves of black walnut trees should not be used because of juglone,

a chemical in the leaves which inhibits growth of many plants.

A two- to three-inch layer of shredded bark provides good weed control. Wood chips are slower to decay than shredded bark and can be used for pathway material in gardens.

The best way to deal with landscape waste is to limit its production in the first place. Or at least produce as little as possible. Select trees and shrubs with their mature height and spread, in mind. Plants requiring little or no pruning do not produce much landscape waste. There are many dwarf and semi-dwarf cultivars available of adapted plants to Nebraska's climate and soils.

Establishing a Commercial Vineyard

Paul E. Read, UNL Professor of Horticulture/Viticulture
Stephen Gamet, UNL Viticulture Research Technologist
Max McFarland, Mac's Creek Winery and Vineyard
Jim Ballard, James Arthur Vineyards
Seth McFarland, Mac's Creek Winery and Vineyard

Note: This is part of a series of articles related to commercial vineyards in Nebraska.

Site Preparation and Vineyard Design

Because grapevines are potentially very long-lived, it is important site preparation and vineyard design be done very carefully and thoroughly. You will live a long time with your vineyard, including any mistakes. As noted in previous articles, pH adjustment and most fertilization should be done prior to planting. Correction of drainage problems and control of persistent perennial weeds must also be implemented before planting. Planning at least one year ahead of establishment of the planting should facilitate accomplishment of site preparation requirements. Plowing or rototilling the entire site, followed by fertilization, liming (if needed) and weed management practices can be done in the year before planting.

A cover crop can be seeded in late summer/early fall, then planting can take place the following spring. If planting in sod, such as an old pasture, it may be desirable to only plow the location of the rows to be planted. The sod left between the rows will reduce erosion and aid in use of equipment following a rain.

Planting

It is a good idea to survey the vineyard prior to development of a planting plan. Make a scale drawing or map of your planting plan—it will prove to be a valuable record as your vineyard develops. Grapevine rows are normally planted in a north-south orientation, with straight rows preferred where possible. Occasionally it may be necessary to plant rows on a contour or across a slope. However, curved rows will usually lead to problems with stability of the trellis. Differences in light interception between North/South and East/West row orientation lead to different ripening times.

Spacing of plants varies with cultivars and equipment. A common spacing is ten feet between rows with plants eight feet apart in the row. Wider row spacing may be dictated by equipment available or trellis style. Greater spacing between plants in the row may be appropriate for cultivars of exceptional vigor (e.g. 'Edelweiss', 'St. Vincent', 'Frontenac') or on sites that stimulate strong vine growth. Wide row spacings intercept less sunlight with more hitting the ground and thus reduce yield per acre; narrow row spacings may impede equipment and reduce air flow through the vineyard, which will lead to greater disease problems. Close row and plant spacings will increase costs of establishment, since more plants and trellising will need to be purchased. For example, 8 x 10 foot spacing = 545 plants per acre, while 8 x 12 foot spacing = 454 plants per acre.



The Stately American Elm

By Paul Hay
UNL Extension Educator

We recently planted 23 new trees around the horse arena on the south edge of Gage County's Fairgrounds. They were bare root trees from a Nebraska nursery and we appear to be off to a good start. The trees selected included: red oak, London plane tree (sycamore), American linden, flowering crab, Kentucky coffee tree and pioneer elm.

Is pioneer elm the return of the American elm? The American elm has never left. Nebraska deserted it as a state tree and replaced it with the cottonwood. There are still plenty of American elms around. The problem is Dutch elm disease is also still around. We see American elms in woodlands, right of ways and fence rows. They grow well for 10, 15 or even 20 years until Dutch elm disease wipes them out and a new crop has to begin again.

In the nursery trade there are offerings of American elms. Liberty, Valley Forge, Washington, and Jefferson are some of the cultivars. The verdict is still out on these, but so far, it appears they are more resistant to Dutch elm disease, but are not immune. Some day we will find immunity. It has to be out there somewhere if the gene for gene theory is correct. This theory says for any gene in an infectious agent there is a gene to block or

counteract that infection.

The two most promising American elm-like trees in the nursery trade today are pioneer elm and accolade elm. Accolade is a complex cross selection from Asian elm species. It will achieve a mature height of 70 feet with a 60 foot crown. It is suited to our planting zone. Accolade is a vase-shaped tree with arching limbs similar to the American elm. The leaves are glossy and dark green and the foliage is somewhat resistant to the feeding of the elm leaf beetle which riddles the leaves of Chinese/Siberian elms we have growing in the area.

Pioneer elm is a selected cross of two species of European elms. Pioneer elm has a rounded shape and will gain a height of 50 feet and a spread width about the same. The dark green foliage in a few years will shade the 4-H horse participant's families at fair time and change to yellow in the fall. The Pioneer elm combines the fast growth strength to withstand the challenging Nebraska



Pioneer Elm

conditions.

The City of Beatrice, like most Nebraska towns, removed over 16,000 American elms from the city in the 1960s and '70s. Let us hope these look-alike replacements today and a truly resistant American elm tomorrow can bring the glory of the American elm back to the people of Nebraska.

Elms Approved for City of Lincoln Streets

The City of Lincoln has a list of approved trees for streets. Property owners must obtain a permit to plant any tree on CITY property BEFORE planting is done. As of Feb. 2008, approved elms are: Accolade, New Harmony, Valley Forge, Cathedral, Vanguard, Discovery, Triumph and Pioneer. Among elms that will not be permitted as street trees are Siberian elm and non-approved elms. For more information, go to <http://www.lincoln.ne.gov/city/parks/parks/forestry/forindex.htm> or call Forestry at 441-7035.

Glossy Plant Ads

They're starting already! Purveyors of questionable plant deals are busy trying to take advantage of people's thirst for spring planting. Glossy ads compete for our attention with coupons for fifty cents off breakfast cereal or laundry detergent. But most of these plant ads are not a bargain.

Take dwarf banana trees. They're interesting as houseplants, but I've yet to see them produce fruit year-round in a sunny window, as promised in the ads. Maybe in a large greenhouse or conservatory, but not in an average home. Nor can you produce strawberries indoors, "even in winter."

Ditto, tree tomatoes which, according to the ads, are "not to be confused with an ordinary vine or a

tomato plant." "...simply stand back and watch your tree quickly zoom to the full height desired and supply you with yummy fresh garden tomatoes." Don't you believe it! If the plants ever do produce fruit for you—and that's unlikely—it will be instantly apparent that they aren't tomatoes at all.

There are many legitimate mail-order (and Internet) nurseries whose reputations are built on years of service. Put your trust in them—and in local nurseries and garden centers. They know what can be expected to grow well here... and what can't. The nursery or garden center down the road from you wants to keep your business. They're not about to make up wild claims for plants that are marginally hardy here, at best.

Spraying For Weeds May Also Damage Other Plants

Chemical herbicides kill weeds, says UNL Extension Forester Dennis Adams, but they also can damage or kill other plants. Depending on the aim of the individual spraying or the way the wind blows, chemical herbicides could end up in areas that do not need them.

Despite their size, trees are vulnerable to herbicide. Even though trees can appear to be "OK" during the summer, their health and vigor may be weakened. Wind drift of herbicides can cause die back of trees' foliage and even death of a tree.

In a weakened condition, trees are an easy target for harmful insects and diseases that could kill them. To avoid dangers and drift, exercise caution and responsibility when spraying herbicides. When wind velocity is more than 8 mph, it may be best to avoid application. Wind may cause poor coverage and excessive drift. Use caution when spraying 2-4D ester, Dicamba or similar herbicides near vegetables, ornamentals, trees, shrubs or broadleaf crops. Be sure to follow label directions and calibrate application equipment.

Thank You Master Gardeners!

Five Lancaster County Master Gardeners were recently awarded plaques to recognize them for their years of service to the Lancaster County Master Gardener program. We appreciate their dedication and support to University of Nebraska Extension programming in Lancaster County. Master Gardeners are given annual training by UNL personnel and in return provide 40 hours of volunteer time to educational outreach such as answering horticulture phone calls.



(Above, L-R)
Bertine Loop, 20 years;
Gladys Jeurink, 30 years;
and
LaVina Vagts, 25 years.

(Right, L-R)
Bob Gilmour, 20 years
and
Mary Gilmour-20 years.



Planning to Plant a Tree for Arbor Day? Read This First!

Mary Jane Frogge
UNL Extension Associate

Planting a tree for Arbor Day is a Nebraska tradition for many families. Here are some things to consider before purchasing and planting a new tree this year.

Properly planted and cared for trees add beauty and value to almost any property, whether they are planted in a park, in front of your house, or along a street or highway. Selecting planting locations is one of the most critical decisions made during the planting process. If the plant must eventually be removed because the site is unsuitable, then the planting was a failure.

To avoid failure, consider overhead and underground utilities, future construction sites and the mature size of the plant. Trees often have to be removed because they have grown too large for the site. Large landscape-sized trees should be planted a minimum of 15 to 20 feet away from buildings or other obstructions. Overhead and underground utilities must be considered in order to avoid potential conflicts. Large trees should be planted a minimum of 20 to 25 feet from overhead power lines. When selecting your planting location, consider the plant's requirements for growth and survival, such as exposure to sunlight and soil drainage needs.

Once you have selected the species that will perform the desired function in your landscape, visit a reliable nursery in your local area who will guarantee its plant material. Consider the size and height of the tree when you are selecting your plant. Smaller trees will establish better than larger trees. If the tree is too large, it may go into transplant shock and never fully recover.

Container-grown stock may be planted during most of the year except when soils are frozen and during the extreme heat of summer. The best time for planting container-grown stock is in the spring between March 15 and May 30, if weather and soil conditions permit. All plant material should be planted as soon as possible after receipt. There is no advantage from storing landscape plants.

Remove all labels and wires to prevent girdling. The planting site should be dug two to three times wider than the root system of the tree to be planted. The finished hole should be narrower at the bottom than at the top and be at least two feet wider than the root mass. With heavy or hard soils, the sides of the planting hole should be loosened to facilitate root penetration into the adjacent soil. Plant the tree back at the same depth it was originally grown. Make sure all the roots are covered with soil,



Mulching a newly planted tree with woodchips.

but do not plant to deep. Soil should not be up around the trunk. The soil used for backfill should be neither too wet nor too dry and all large stones or clods should be removed. Backfill with the existing soil. Do not use soil amendments.

The purpose of most staking and guying is to prevent a newly planted tree from tipping over in the wind. Excessive movement can dislodge the small, fibrous roots from their new footing in the soil before they are firmly established. However, many trees are lost because guying materials are not removed or are improperly installed. If at all possible, staking and guying systems should not be used. If plants are staked and guyed, the material used should have a broad surface at the point of contact with the tree to prevent damage from rubbing. Supports should allow for some free movement of the plant. Do not use wire and hose. To prevent girdling, remove all guying material at the end of the first growing season.

Tree wrap should not be used on newly planted trees. Tree wraps may not always protect trunks from damage and, in fact, can cause, hide and increase problems. In addition, tree wrap covers the photosynthetic tissues of the trunk, preventing the production of food that is needed by the young tree. Tree wraps should be used during the time that the tree is being transported and needs protection from mechanical damage. Some wraps are claimed to protect trees against insect damage. However, borer activity under wraps and guards is frequently reported, and research has shown that insect and disease problems can sometimes be even worse on trees that are wrapped. Often the tree wrap causes the bark to remain moist, even in dry weather. Bark and cambial tissue may be seriously damaged or killed when too much water is held against the trunk. This problem is compounded when wraps at the base of the trunk are covered with several inches of mulch.

Water is critical to the success of any tree planting. Tree roots, especially the small, water absorbing roots, are easily damaged during transplanting. For sufficient water uptake to occur, the root ball of a newly planted tree must be kept moist, but not saturated. Monitor the moisture in the root ball daily and water as needed so that the root ball does not dry out. The area outside of the root ball should be watered to encourage root growth into the surrounding soil. Avoid over watering, which is a major cause of tree failure in many Nebraska communities. Heavy clay soils that have been compacted during construction activities severely restrict the movement of water and commonly lead to saturated conditions.

Mulching is the most important post-planting practice that you can do to improve the health and vigor of your landscape plant. Studies have shown that wood chip mulch can nearly double plant growth in the first few years after planting. Mulch with a two to three inch layer of organic material. The minimum diameter of the mulched area should be 2 feet. Do not place mulch directly against the stem of the plant. Proper mulching provides a well-groomed appearance and designates an area where grass or weeds are eliminated, which results in lower damage rates from mowers and weed trimmers. Mechanical damage is one of the leading causes of injury and death of landscape plants.

Most soils contain sufficient levels of available nutrients to supply the requirements of newly planted landscape plants except where construction has either altered the soil or changed its composition. Fertilizer should not be applied during the first several growing seasons while the new roots are establishing themselves. After this period, determination of additional nutrient needs should be based upon the condition and vitality of the plants and analysis of soil samples.

Source: NebGuide Woody Landscape Plants



Garden Guide THINGS TO DO THIS MONTH

By Mary Jane Frogge, UNL Extension Associate

Cut flower stalks back to the ground on daffodils, hyacinths and other spring flowering bulbs as the flowers fade. Do not cut the foliage until it dies naturally. The leaves are necessary to produce strong bulbs capable of reflowering next year.

The last Friday in April is National Arbor Day. Plant a tree or support an organization which does.

Prune spring blooming shrubs such as forsythia and spirea after they have completed flowering.

Remove sticks, rocks and other debris from your lawn to prevent damaging your lawnmower or injuring yourself when mowing. Check your lawnmower and other lawn-care equipment in preparation for the coming season.

Put a birdhouse in the garden to attract insect eating friends.

Seed bare spots in your fescue or bluegrass lawn.

Scatter annual poppy seeds in flower borders. The fine seeds need not be covered. The plants grow rapidly and provide colorful flowers in early summer.

In a sunny location with poor soil, plant nasturtiums for a colorful show. They require warm soil to sprout and start blooming in about 50 days. Too much water and fertilizer produces excess leaves and few flowers.

When chrysanthemums show signs of life, dig up and divide large plants. Discard woody portions and replant divisions 12 to 15 inches apart.

Measure the rainfall with a rain gauge posted near the garden so you can tell when to water. The garden needs about one inch of rain per week from April to September.

Consider planting flowers which may be dried for winter arrangements. Some of the best are strawflower, statice, celosia and globe amaranth.

Do not restrict yourself to buying plants in bloom. Petunias that bloom in the pack are often rootbound or overgrown and after planting will actually be set back and cease to bloom for about a month. Plants without blossoms will actually bloom sooner and will grow better as well.

To extend the blooming period of gladiolus, plant early, middle and late-season selections each week until the middle of June. Choose a sunny location and plant the corms 4-6 inches deep and 6-8 inches apart.

Controlling Fleas

Barb Ogg
UNL Extension Educator

Fleas are obligate blood feeders, which means the female flea must have a blood meal to reproduce. The female flea lays eggs while on the animal host, but the eggs are not glued to hair so they fall off the host into the nesting material. Flea eggs hatch into tiny wormlike larvae which feed on organic debris.

Fleas are nearly always associated with animals that nest. Cats, dogs, raccoons, opossum, rabbits, rats and mice are nesting animals and commonly have fleas, but grazing animals like cattle, deer and elk rarely do.

Controlling Fleas

Fleas are difficult to control because you have to think about treating the animal host (pet or wild animal) and the home environment, particularly pet bedding areas or other locations where the pet spends time. If pets go outdoors, sometimes the outdoor environment also needs to be treated. Each of these different areas need a specific type of treatment.

Treat the animal. There are a number of treatment methods for treating pets. Dips and shampoos can be obtained from a pet store or a veterinarian. Some of the more common prescription products include lufenuron (Program®), fipronil (Frontline®) or imidacloprid (Advantage®). Preventative treatments should be started in the springtime before flea infestations increase. In the case of a wild animal host, it is important to exclude the wild animal as the source of the fleas.

Treat the home environment. Places where pets spend time are most likely infested with fleas. Vacuum thoroughly where pets

Jim Kalisch, UNL Department of Entomology



Highly magnified view of a cat flea (above) and a flea on a cat (right).

spend time resting. Consider steam cleaning carpets to help remove food for larvae and may even kill larvae. Beds that pets sleep on will likely be infested. Wash bedding in hot water and dry in a hot dryer. Pay special attention to where pets jump off the bed or sofa and flea eggs could be dislodged.

Chemical treatments will probably be necessary to control adult (biting) fleas and the immatures.

Unusual flea infestations:

Case #1. Specific areas of a large manufacturing facility developed a flea infestation during the spring. They were later determined to be cat fleas, *Ctenocephalides felis*. The areas on the production floor were treated and the problem subsided for a while, but the fleas returned to torment the workers.

What was overlooked was the identification of the animal host. Cat fleas have a wide host range; in this case, the source of the infestation was determined to be a raccoon. In early spring, a pregnant female raccoon found its way into the crawl-space and had a litter of pups. After weaning, mom and the pups left the crawlspace, but the fleas remained. Because the crawlspace was not identified as the source of the fleas, it was not treated. Treatment of the crawlspace was necessary to solving



Vicki Jedlicka, UNL Extension in Lancaster County

this flea infestation.

How common are fleas on raccoons? Results of one research study showed cat fleas were found on 50% of the raccoons trapped in urban areas. A single raccoon can carry more than 50 fleas.

Case #2. Flea larvae were found in the bed of a pre-schooler. The pet cat sleeps on the bed, but never goes outdoors. How could this flea infestation get started?

One of the parents visited a family who had animals and picked up a flea. Fleas have remarkable jumping abilities and can easily hitch a ride home. Vet offices and pet stores are also locations where fleas can be picked up.

Human Fleas

The most common domestic flea in the U.S. is the cat flea, which has a very wide host range. However, there is also a human flea, *Pulex irritans*, which isn't found very often in the U.S. today, but has historical connections with humans. Before modern hygiene and laundering, human fleas were common in dwellings, particularly in bedding. During the Renaissance, ladies wore fur collars to catch fleas, which could then be removed and shaken out. Today, *Pulex irritans* is rare in the U.S. and most likely associated with domesticated pigs.

Managing Deer Damage

Soni Cochran
UNL Extension Associate

In eastern Nebraska, white-tailed deer are common in both rural and urban areas. They are very adaptable and do best living near agricultural crops, extensive cover from trees and shrubs, and when they have access to streams. Deer are one of Nebraska's most valued wildlife resources, but they can also damage plant resources and personal property.

- **Deer-vehicle collisions.** About 5,000 deer-vehicle collisions are reported each year in Nebraska.
- **Diseases.** Deer can transmit diseases like *salmonella*, *giardia* and *E. coli*. Wearing protective equipment like disposable gloves when handling and processing deer helps reduce your risk.
- **Chronic wasting disease** is a degenerative, fatal disease affecting members of the deer family. Nearly all the cases of this disease have been found in the panhandle of Nebraska. Hunters should have their deer tested for chronic wasting disease at hunter check stations or with home test kits.

Identifying Damage

Browsing by deer is easily identified by the jagged or torn edges of twigs or stems. Most browsing

Stephen Vantassel, UNL School of Natural Resources



Tree branch damage caused by deer browsing (left) and rabbit browsing (right)

occurs from the ground up to six feet. In the fall, male deer rub their antlers against trees which can lead to severe damage to trees.

If you find damage on a plant or tree, look at the ground to see if you find deer pellets (droppings). Deer pellets are usually in a group, are larger than rabbit pellets and are slightly sausage-shaped. You may also find the distinct print of a deer track nearby on bare soil.

Preventing Damage

Habitat Modification: Deer feed on a wide variety of plants. If you notice damage to landscape plants, try planting ornamentals less likely to be damaged by deer. No plant is deer-proof, but you may be able to reduce the damage. A list of

plants is available at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/pest>

Removing or changing the actual habitat of deer is not recommended because of the impacts on other wildlife and the environment. Deer also adapt easily to frightening devices, with the exception of dogs.

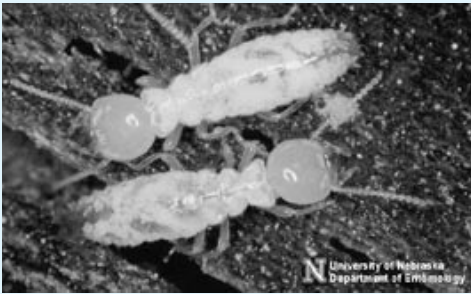
Exclusion: Fencing can be very effective in preventing and reducing deer damage. You can also exclude individual trees, shrubs and other plants from deer browsing and antler rubbing. Chicken wire, hardware cloth, plastic netting and plastic tubes and cylinders to encase young trees are available from a number of sources at low costs.

Repellents: Measure the effectiveness of repellents by reduction of damage, not elimination. These products are high cost, limited use, usually labor intensive and have variable results.

Population Reduction: Since the level of deer damage is often linked to the number of deer in an area, population reduction may be the most effective and efficient means of preventing and controlling damage.

FOR MORE INFORMATION
UNL Extension NebGuide "Managing Deer Damage in Nebraska" available at the extension office or online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/pest>

Everything Homeowners Need to Know About Termite Control



Thursday, May 8

6:30–9:30 p.m.

Lancaster Extension Education Center
444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln

Attendees will:

- Learn to identify termites and their damage.
- Learn unbiased information about effective treatments, based on research results.
- Learn why treatments cost so much.
- Receive up-to-date reference materials.
- Be informed consumers and make better decisions.

Cost: \$25.

Call 441-7180 for more information.

UNL Termite Researcher Needs Infested House!

We have already noticed termite activity in the Lincoln area. If you have a termite-infested house in the Lincoln/Lancaster County area, UNL may be able to help you. UNL termite researcher, Shripat Kamble, is looking for houses to treat as part of a research study. In order to have your house qualify, his research team *must* collect live termites from the inside of the house. Contact Shripat (472-6857) if you have a house with a live infestation and you are interested in being part of this study.

Household Hazardous Waste Collections

These collections are for household only; not for businesses. Only residents of Lincoln and Lancaster County can bring items to collections.

Saturday, April 12, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.
State Fair Park (4-H Youth Complex)

Saturday, May 17, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.
Pfizer Inc., 601 West Cornhusker,
includes Latex Paint Exchange

Friday, June 20, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.
Union College Parking Lot, 52 & Cooper Streets

Saturday, June 21, 9 a.m.–1 p.m.
NE Wesleyan University, parking lot,
56 and Huntington Streets

Some items you can bring for disposal:

Thermometers, thermostats containing mercury, solvents, oil-based paint, paint thinner, pesticides, (even banned products like DDT), items containing PCB's (ballasts from fluorescent fixtures and capacitors from old appliances). Compact fluorescent light bulbs (CFL's) contain mercury and will be accepted. On May 17 only, you may bring latex paint for the paint exchange.

Do not bring: asbestos, tires, batteries, used oil, antifreeze, medicines, fertilizers, explosives and ammunition.

Still unsure what you have will be acceptable? Call the Lincoln-Lancaster County Health Department at **441-8040.**



By Alice Henneman, MS, RD, UNL Extension Educator

Here's a quick, colorful, lowfat, potato salad highlighted by the addition of tiny dots of green peas.

Country Style Potato Salad

Serving Size: 1 cup • Yield: 4 servings

- 3 medium baking potatoes
- 1 cup chopped celery
- ½ cup minced onion
- 1 cup frozen peas
- 1 tablespoon prepared mustard
- ½ cup mayonnaise, lowfat
- ½ cup yogurt, nonfat plain
- fresh cracked black pepper to taste
- garnish: lettuce and tomato



Wash potatoes, leave skin on and cut in bite-size chunks. Place in pan and cover with water. Bring to a boil, lower to simmer and cook uncovered until potatoes are tender, about 20 minutes. Drain in colander and sprinkle lightly with cold water. In the mean time, put the rest of the ingredients in a large mixing bowl. Add drained potatoes to the bowl. Mix well and refrigerate until ready to use. Garnish with fresh lettuce and sliced tomatoes.

Source: Adapted from: Cooking Demo II, Food and Health Communications, Inc. available at Food Stamp Nutrition Connection Recipe Finder <http://recipefinder.nal.usda.gov>

Nutrition Facts: Calories, 180; Calories from Fat, 90; Total Fat, 10g; Saturated Fat, 1.5g; Trans Fat, 0g; Cholesterol, 10mg; Sodium, 330mg; Total Carbohydrate, 18g; Dietary Fiber, 5g; Sugars, 8g; Protein, 6g.

What Counts as a Cup of Fruits and Vegetables?

The MyPyramid Food Guidance System recommends eating 2 cups of fruit and 2½ cups of vegetables for a 2,000 calorie diet. How much is this?

In general, 1 cup of raw or cooked vegetables or 100% vegetable juice, or 2 cups of raw leafy greens can be considered as 1 cup from the vegetable group. One cup of fruit or 100% fruit juice or ½ cup of dried fruit can be considered as 1 cup from the fruit group.

Here are the cup amounts of some common fruits and vegetables.

- 1 small apple
- 12 baby carrots or 2 medium carrots
- 16 grapes
- 8 large strawberries
- 1 cup cooked greens or 2 cups raw (spinach, collards, mustard greens, turnip greens)
- 1 medium potato
- 1 large banana
- 1 small wedge watermelon
- 1 large ear of corn

Source: Adapted from information provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention at <http://www.fruitsandveggiesmatter.gov/index.html>

Name That Food!

Alice Henneman, MS, RD
UNL Extension Educator

Most of us eat at least three times a day. How much do you REALLY know about the foods you eat? Play "Name that Food" and find out! Answers are at the bottom.

Food 1: I'm red, round and contain vitamins C and A. Though most people call me a vegetable, I'm really a fruit. I taste best when I'm stored at room temperature away from direct sunlight.

Food 2: While I'm often thought of as a vegetable side dish, I also can be served as a meat-free entrée. I'm kidney or oval shaped. I provide protein, fiber and am an excellent source of folate, a B vitamin.

Food 3: I'm a green fruit that is a source of "monounsaturated" fat, a heart-healthy fat. Store me at room temperature until I ripen.

Food 4: I'm on the nutty side of the same plant family as peaches and apricots. I'm a good source of vitamin E. There are 23 of me in one ounce, about a handful. Hint: I begin with an "A" and am often served in a mixture with other similar foods.

Food 5: I'm a member of the grain food group and a good source of fiber. I increase in size after I'm prepared. Three cups of me, served without added fat or sugar, provide less than 100 calories. I'm often eaten as a snack.

Food 6: A cup of me is similar to milk in calcium content. I'm available in several flavors. I'm a good source of protein and the B vitamin, riboflavin.

Food 7: I'm a good source of potassium. Store me at room temperature until I ripen; then



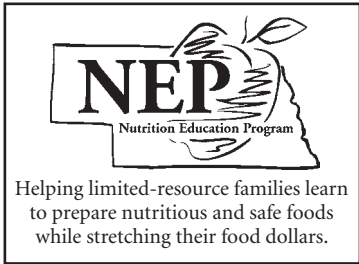
refrigerate me. Though my skin darkens in the refrigerator, I'll still be light inside.

Food 8: I belong to the morning glory family. I'm orange and high in vitamin A. I taste best stored in a cool, dry, dark place (55 to 60 degrees F) and stay fresh for 3 to 5 weeks. At room temperature, I'm at my peak for about a week. I'm sometimes served mashed.

Food 9: And for a last question, here's a food riddle... You throw away the outside and cook the inside. Then eat the outside and throw away the inside. I'm yellow in color. Hint: after throwing away the "outside," the "inside" becomes the "outside."

- ANSWERS**
1. Tomato
 2. Dried beans (Great Northern, kidney, garbanzo, black beans, etc.)
 3. Avocado
 4. Almond
 5. Popcorn
 6. Yogurt
 7. Banana
 8. Sweet potato
 9. Corn on the cob. You throw away the husk (outside), cook and eat the corn (inside) AND new (outside), then throw away the cob (inside).

\$tretch Your Food Dollar With These 10 Money \$aving \$trategies



Mardel Meinke
UNL Extension Associate

On the average, Americans are spending close to 15 percent of their annual income on food. Prices continue to rise, so shopping smart is more important than ever. Do you know about these ten money saving strategies?

1. Keep a master list of the items you replenish weekly, such as milk, bread, cereals, produce etc. and add additional items you need at the bottom. This helps keep your priority items at the top of the list and saves time. If you have pre-planned your week's menu, it is easy to make sure the items needed to serve those foods are on your list.

2. Know your super-market. Supermarkets fall into two categories—"EDLP (everyday low prices) and "high-lows", which have the reputation of being more expensive. You may think the EDLP stores are always less expensive, but this isn't necessarily the case. High-lows often drop prices on sale items lower than the EDLPs. Also know which stores will match the

price of food from sale ads of other stores and take advantage of this opportunity.

3. Look for sales cycles. Many supermarkets cycle the various categories of food on sale approximately every 12 weeks. If you shop for just what you need every week, you miss out on many of the sales. Buy larger quantities of shelf-stable foods, including canned, dried and non-perishable foods when they are on sale and stock your pantry.

4. Cut coupons from many sources, including on-line coupons. You will save the most if you use coupons for items you normally purchase, not "extras".

5. At the store:
A. **Shop the perimeter** of the store first. This is where the fresh produce, meats and dairy are located. Then check the inner aisles for other needed items, avoiding the more pricey prepackaged foods.

B. **Look up and down.** The higher-priced foods are often placed on the shelves at eye-level. Look up and look down to check out the store brands and sale items.
C. **Check the unit price** on the shelf and the weight. The bigger box may not contain more. Also, if purchasing individual servings of foods, you are probably paying much more for the package than for the food. Buy the larger quantity and divide into small containers yourself, freezing them, if

necessary.
6. Look for products on sale that are close to their sell-by date. Be ready to use the food immediately or freeze it and use later.

7. Sign up for the store cards that are offered, even if you don't shop there often. You may be missing out on store specials, double coupons, rain checks or other money-saving opportunities.

8. Look for meat savings. Meat is usually the highest-priced food in your cart. Many butchers will package smaller cuts of meat or run tougher cuts through the tenderizer. Ask what time of day they do their markdowns and try to shop accordingly. If you find a package with a sell-by date "today," ask if they will mark it down.

9. Make your own, whether it is chopping, slicing, grating, peeling, cooking, etc. Pre-made meals are always more expensive. If you find though, you are often ordering in or eating out, a ready-to-cook meal may be less expensive.

10. Watch the scanner when you check out. Try to unload your items before the checkout person starts scanning them so you can make sure the prices are correct. Also, always check your receipt before leaving the store.

Use these strategies and you will most likely see your food bills decrease rather than increase.

FAMILY & COMMUNITY EDUCATION (FCE) CLUBS

Presidents' Notes—Bonnie's Bits

Bonnie Krueger
FCE Council Chair

This is my favorite time of the year. Easter came early and brings us new beginnings. Spring comes and winter takes retreat. New seed catalogues arrive and we can't wait to look through them and order all the new garden variety for 2008. We watch the shrubs and trees bud, dormant seeds beneath earths



floor leap from darkness. Fertile fields become green and lush. We all know the old saying *APRIL showers bring MAY flowers*. But then again, we only hope we don't get APRIL FOOLED before it arrives.

Reminder the FCE Council meeting will be Monday, March 24 at 1 p.m. We will meet at the Olive Garden, 6100 "O" Street, for lunch followed by



our business meeting. Bring your items to the council meeting for the soldiers' boxes (see your president's letter for ideas).

Mark your calendar for Thursday, July 10 for our Sizzling Summer Sampler. Our program will be "Back to the Beach" Victorian through the '60s styles. Watch for more details coming in May. Plant kindness and gather love.

FCE News & Events

Leader Training March 27

The next FCE and community leader training is scheduled for Thursday, March 27, 1 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. This leader training lesson gives you the tools to present this topic as a program. Extension provides a teaching outline for the facilitator and a handout for participants.

Extension Educator Lorene Bartos will present the lesson "Developing Cultural Understanding and Cultural Competence." This lesson focuses on how individuals can be more responsive to cultural differences and diversity in backgrounds and be global citizens in today's changing world.

Non-FCE members, please call Pam at 441-7180, to preregister so packets can be prepared.

Southeast District Meeting, April 23

Lancaster County is hosting the Southeast District FCE meeting on Wednesday, April 23, 9:30 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Janet Broer, Southeast District Director and a member of the Beltline FCE in our county, is organizing the event: WOMEN EXTRA ORDINARE. The program and brunch, "Crackin' Up — Easy Egg and Turkey Dishes," will be presented by Mary Torell, Public Information Officer Poultry & Egg Division, Nebraska Department of Agriculture. The afternoon program "Fun with Quilts" will be presented by Twyla Lidolph, Salt Creek Circle FCE member.

Registration fee is \$10 (make checks payable to FCE District Meeting) and

includes the brunch. Mail to Janet Broer, SE District Director, 2201 Cardwell Road, Lincoln, NE 68523. Preregistrations are due April 18.

FCE Scholarship Applications Due May 1

A \$400 Scholarship provided by the Lancaster County FCE Council is available for a graduate of a high school in Lancaster County or a permanent resident of Lancaster County majoring in Family and Consumer Science or a health occupation. This is open to full-time students beginning their sophomore, junior or senior year of college in the fall of 2008 or who have completed two quarters of study in a vocational school. Applications are due May 1 in the extension office.



by Lorene Bartos, UNL Extension Educator

Most housecleaning work is done in the kitchen and the bathroom. Working from the cleanest to the dirtiest areas is the best way to clean these rooms. In the bathroom clean the mirror first, then the sink, toilet, tub/show and finally the floor. In the kitchen, clean the sink and countertops, range and stove top and then the floor. Also, if you have two or more levels to clean, keep cleaning supplies on each level so they are handy, it saves hauling them from floor to floor.

Get Your Life/Home in Order

Organizing doesn't have to be an over whelming task. A good filing system is a place to start.

A filing system only works if it works for you and you can work with it. The following steps may be of help in developing a filing system—for you.

- Gather all materials to be filed in one location.
- Have available a wastebasket, file folders, labels and a pen.
- Pick up the item on the TOP of the pile and decide if this item has value for you. If it doesn't, THROW IT AWAY!
- If the item is of value, ask yourself the question, "What is this about, for me?" and choose a folder heading.
- Label the file folder and file the piece of paper you are holding; continue through the pile, one item at a time, consolidating as much as possible.

- When your mind begins to blur, STOP FILING for the day.
- Once your files are established, each time you consult a file folder, flip through it quickly to pick out and throw away the "dead wood." Help yourself feel more in control of your own life—**get those stacks of paper organized!**

A computer filing system works well for those who are electronically inclined. It is still important to have a filing system to handle the other important papers around the home.

Once the paper parade is in order you can start organizing the other parts of the home such as store rooms and closets. Well labeled tub and boxes will help organize these areas.

More Fun in Your Family Life

There's hardly a family expert who would not agree with the message family fun is vitally important for healthy living. If you merely teach children how to cope with problems you haven't taught them how to experience joy. We're finding in our research just because a person isn't down doesn't mean he or she's up. Here's how to teach this important life skill:

Make ordinary things fun. One great thing about fun is it doesn't have to cost anything, and it doesn't have to take extra time. Psychologists say happiness is actually just a way of looking at your life, being willing to use any opportunity to laugh at anything that might come your way.

Teach your children the magic of anticipation. Kids learn from their parents how to look forward to things. It's important to sit down with your children daily and talk about upcoming happy events—to show them how to anticipate good times. It doesn't have to be a major event, like



a trip to Disney World or a holiday with tons of presents. Something simple, like talking about next weekend, will do just fine.

Help your children be realistic about what's going to happen. You get your kids in the mood for anticipating the wonderful things about to take place, and suddenly their imagination knows no bounds. You don't want to be a spoiler, but you also don't want to let your child's version of things swing wildly away from what's practical.

Get in the habit of savoring the moment. Children tend to be absorbed in the experience, while adults may step back and reflect on it.

Parents should be careful not to push their child in to adopting their analytic style. It's okay to let your child simply experience the wonderment of something, like rolling in a pile of leaves. Don't make her think she has to put a label on what she's feeling.

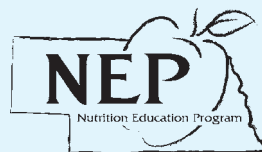
Take plenty of strolls down memory lane. It's OK to reminisce about old times, to savor things that happened in the past and keep them alive in your child's memory. Taking photographs and gathering souvenirs are very good ways. Also, tell stories about things the child has done.

Encourage your children's playful side. You can show your kids how to be light, how to take pleasure from life, how to be pleased with themselves. When you laugh at a child's jokes—even the early, rudimentary ones like putting his shoes on his ears—you're helping him develop what the world will later call his marvelous sense of humor.

Source: Debra Schroeder, UNL Extension Educator

ABC's for Good Health, April 15 & 22

A 2-Part Series Which can Change Your Life



UNL Extension Nutrition Education Program (NEP) is presenting "ABC's for Good Health," a free series aimed at limited- to moderate-income women. **If you are receiving assistance such as food stamps or Medicaid, you would qualify to attend this program.** Upcoming dates are Tuesdays, April 15 and 22, 6-8:30 p.m.

Learn that good health is as easy as:

- A) Aim for fitness — Increase your physical activity with a personalized walking program.
- B) Build a healthy base — Use MyPyramid to guide your food choices.
- C) Choose sensibly — Balance the foods you need and enjoy.

Participants receive:

- A pedometer and inspiration to stay fit
- A notebook with practical nutrition information
- New recipes and food preparation ideas
- A cookbook (valued at \$15) after completing the series

Sessions are held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road in Lincoln. Please register by April 8. Call NEP at 441-7180 for more information or to register.





April

Stephenie Doeschot

Lancaster County 4-H is proud to announce Stephenie Doeschot as winner of April's "Heart of 4-H Award" in recognition of outstanding volunteer service.

Ten years ago, Stephenie started as a project leader for Creative Kids 4-H club. Now she is treasurer of 4-H Council and a County Fair co-superintendent of the 4-H Style Revue.

She also has helped with Food Booth at the County Fair and Fair Fun Day tours for daycare groups.

"I like being a 4-H volunteer because it is so much fun!" says Stephenie. "Not only fun, but it is such a great opportunity to teach practical skills for life that also build character. 4-H develops poise, confidence and helps build the leaders of tomorrow — who wouldn't want to be a part of that? Every time I see a child learn a new skill or accomplish a seemingly hard task, I am so proud to be a part of 4-H!"

She and her husband Clayton operate a family farm near Hickman with their four children (who are 4-H members). In addition to volunteering for 4-H, Stephenie is director of Primary Camp at Maranatha Bible Camp and a crew leader of Dare 2 Share youth conference.

Congratulations to Stephenie. Volunteers like her are indeed the heart of 4-H!

Nominate your favorite 4-H volunteer by submitting the form available online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h> or at the extension office. Nominations of co-volunteers welcome.

**Jammie Jamboree, April 12**

Sew jammie bottoms on Saturday, April 12, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Bring your own pull-on pajama bottom pattern, prewashed flannel or 100% cotton fabric (no one-way design fabrics or plaids) and matching thread. Also bring your sewing machine, basic sewing equipment such as scissors, pins, measuring tape, etc. and a sack lunch. Open to all youth (need not be in 4-H). Adults are welcome. Sign up by April 11 by calling 441-7180. Jammie bottoms may be entered at the county fair.

Scrapbooking Workshop, April 19

Make a 4-H or personal scrapbook by attending a workshop on Saturday, April 19 from 10 a.m. to 12 Noon at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Open to all youth ages 10–18 (need not be in 4-H). Tools and supplies will be provided. Cost is \$37 for an 8" x 8" album that comes with real pages and page protectors or \$15 for a six page paper album kit and tape runner. Pay at the door. Optional supplies will be available for purchase. Bring related memorabilia and 25–45 pictures for large album, 10–20 for small album. Must RSVP by April 10 by calling 441-7180. Scrapbooks may be entered at the county fair (see Fair Book p. 44, under Heritage).

4-H Speech Contest, April 20

The 2008 4-H Speech Contest will be held Sunday, April 20 at 1:30 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. The Speech Contest provides 4-H'ers the opportunity to learn to express themselves clearly, organize their ideas and have confidence. This year we have added a new age division for our Clover Kids. Any youth ages 5-7 enrolled in 4-H can participate in the speech contest. Register by April 14 by calling 441-7180 or e-mailing dkarmazin2@unl.edu with name, speech title and age division. For speech resources, go to <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Contest/speech.shtml>

New Public Service Announcement Guidelines

This year the 4-H Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contest will not be held face to face. The contest will be held via audio only. Any 4-H member ages 8–18 can submit a PSA via cassette tape or CD playable on any standard stereo equipment to Deanna by April 14. If you do not have the capabilities to record a PSA, contact Deanna to set up a recording time. State 4-H asks for PSA's to be non-county specific so winning PSA's can be aired on radios statewide (for example, say "call your local extension office"). Additional information and examples are online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Contest/speech.shtml>

Camp Scholarships Deadline Extended to May 1

Deadline for the following 4-H Camp scholarships have been extended to May 1:

- Windstream 4-H Camp Scholarship
- Joyce Vahle Memorial Scholarship

Applications are available at the extension office and at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Programs/award.shtml>

.22 Silhouette Shooting Sports Meeting, May 5

A new .22 silhouette shooting sports discipline will be available to 4-H youth! Plan to attend the first organizational meeting on Monday, May 5, 7 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center, 444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln. Interested youth must currently be in grades 6-12 and between ages 11–18. More information will be in the May Nebline.

Livestock Quality Assurance Training, May 15

If you will be showing market animals this year, you will once again be required to be Quality Assurance Certified to be eligible to show. If you have not been QA certified yet through your 4-H club meetings or FFA Chapter, please plan on attending a training on Thursday, May 15 at 7 p.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Please RSVP by May 12 by calling Deanna at 441-7180.

**HORSE BITS****Level Testings April 22 & May 6**

Upcoming riding skills level group tests at the Lancaster Event Center Warm-Up Arena: Tuesday, April 22 at 6:30 p.m. and Tuesday, May 6 at 6:30 p.m. Call Marty at 441-7180.

District & State Entries Due May 9

District and state horse show entries are due to UNL Extension in Lancaster County, 444 Cherrycreek Road in Lincoln by May 9. *No late entries will be excepted!* Anyone planning on going to state must also have their horse IDs turned in and all parts of their horsemanship level tests passed by that date. Entry forms, entry guidelines, entry procedures and the 2 and 3 year old western pleasure affidavits are available at <http://animalscience.unl.edu/horse/horse4h.htm> and at the extension office.

Free 4-H Roping/Ranch Clinic, May 3

A free roping and ranch 4-H clinic will be held Saturday, May 3 at the Salt Creek Wranglers Arena. All Lancaster horse 4-H'ers, their parents and leaders are welcome and encouraged to attend. The clinic is intended for those who have never tried to rope but think it might be fun to try and for advanced ropers who would like to polish their skills.

Areas covered will be: Dummy roping, Dummy roping from horse, Beginning working ranch skills, Roping demonstrations, Heading and Healing, and Antique Bit Display.

Please RSVP to Marty by calling 441-7180 or by e-mailing mcruickshank2@unl.edu — give your name, whether you have or have not roped before, and what areas you would most want to take part in. More detailed information will be in the next Nebline.

**Stampede Results**

The 4-H Horse Stampede was held March 8 at the Animal Science Building on UNL East Campus. The stampede consists of the statewide 4-H art, public speaking, demonstration and horse bowl competitions. Congratulations to ALL Lancaster County 4-H'ers who participated! Complete county results (as well as additional photos) are online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h>



In the **ART CONTEST**, Spencer Peters (above left) earned Junior Division Reserve Champion.

In the **DEMONSTRATION CONTEST**, Cory Peters and Ian Schuster (at left) earned Senior Division Grand Champion with "What Knot to Do."

Ellie Dearmont and Hannah Ronnau (below) earned Junior Division Grand Champion with "The ABCs of PRTs."





4-H Achievement Night

Lancaster County 4-H Achievement Night was held Feb. 12 at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln Animal Science Complex on East Campus. The evening was presented by 4-H Council with generous support from UNL. 4-H'ers, 4-H clubs and 4-H leaders were recognized for their 2007 achievements. The evening included two presentations by Animal Science professors and an optional behind-the-scenes tour at the animal science/vet science teaching labs, research facilities and projects. Lancaster County 4-H congratulates these youth who work throughout the year on their 4-H projects and commit themselves to excellence! We also thank the 4-H leaders who volunteer their time and talents to youth! **For a complete list of award, scholarship and pin recipients (as well as additional photos) visit online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h>**



Nathan Smith was awarded **OUTSTANDING 4-H MEMBER**. He has been a 4-H member for 13 years and is active in two 4-H clubs, Classic Cars R Us (currently as president) and Creative Clovers. He has been in many leadership activities such as 4-H Council and Teen Council.

4-H MERITORIOUS SERVICE was awarded to Gene Veburg who has been a 4-H volunteer for 12 years. He has been leader and county fair superintendent of the Lancaster County Shooting Sports BB Gun/Pellet Rifle/Pellet Pistol program and coached the Trap program for several years. Gene was a co-leader of the Cool Clovers 4-H club with his wife, Sharlotte. He has served as president and treasurer of 4-H Council and represented 4-H on the Lancaster County Extension Board.



Brad Morgan and Katie Zabel were presented American Youth Foundation **I DARE YOU** awards for striving to achieve their personal best.

- NEBRASKA 4-H CLUBS OF EXCELLENCE**
- All American Kids
 - Classic Cars
 - Cool Clovers
 - Creative Clovers
 - Extreme Green
 - Fantastic 4
 - Shimmering Shamrocks
 - Silver Spurs
 - Star City Explorers



COMMUNITY SERVICE AWARDS
Presented to 4-H'ers who have completed the most hours of community service. Award recipients receive a \$30 Activity Certificate from Lancaster County 4-H Council redeemable towards 4-H activities and supplies.

Age 14 and over (pictured above): Carly Belz, Kaley Cook, Ann Dearthmont, Grace Farley, Eliza Hammond, Marian Hanigan, Christina Mayer, Kyle Pedersen, Jessica Silvey, Nathan Smith, Cassandra Spellmeyer and Britni Waller

Age 13 and under (pictured at right): Kailee Brown, Spencer Farley, Jennifer Hoffman, John Hoffman, Jaime Stephenson and Jessica Stephenson



CAREER PORTFOLIOS
County winners and nominated to represent Lancaster County at district competition:
Animal Science: Elizabeth Boender
Communication & Expression: Ann Dearthmont
Science & Technology: Nathan Smith
Consumer Family Science: Britni Waller



COMMUNICATION AWARDS
District Speech & Public Service Announcement (PSA) Contest participants: Grace Farley, Anne Greff, Molly Noel, Kyle Pedersen, Erica Peterson, Jacob Pickrel, Rachel Pickrel, Jaime Stephenson, Jessica Stephenson



COLLEGE SCHOLARSHIPS
Lincoln Center Kiwanis — \$1,000: Nathan Smith
Lancaster County 4-H Council — \$500 (pictured above): Britta Doeschot, Abigail Gabel, Marian Hanigan, Brad Morgan, Nathan Smith and Gabrielle Warner
Lancaster County Teen Council — \$250: Marian Hanigan and Nathan Smith
Lane Community — \$200: Kerry Schachenmeyer

4-H COUNTY FAIR NEWS

2008
LANCASTER COUNTY FAIR
AUGUST 6–10

Fair Books Have Been Mailed, Available Online

Lancaster County Fair Books have been mailed to all 4-H families. The 4-H/FFA portion of the Fair Book, many forms and additional resources are online at <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/Fair>

The 2008 Lancaster County Fair will be held August 6–10 at the Lancaster Event Center. This year's theme is "Thrills, Squeals and Ferris Wheels!"

Lancaster Event Center is now in the midst of its Phase II Expansion plan. By fair time, there will be a new entrance off of Havelock Avenue, a completed Pavilion 3 with arena and more parking.

New in 4-H This Year

- See the Fair Book for detailed information about each of the following:
- **Photography** — Nebraska 4-H has all new photography classes to match the new manuals: Focus on Photography – Unit I, Controlling the Image – Unit II and Mastering Photography – Unit III. There are also some county-only classes (not eligible for State Fair) such as "Photogram" and "Favorite photo."
 - **Robotics** — Nebraska 4-H has robotic classes to match the new manuals: Robot Explorer–Unit 1 and Robotic Probe – Unit 2.
 - **Theatre Arts** — at the request of 4-H After-school clubs, two county-only classes for clubs have been added: 4-H Club Portfolio and 4-H Club Acting Portfolio.
 - **Roping/Working Ranch Horse Show** will be held in the new Pavilion 3 – Arena on Thursday, Aug. 7 at 7 p.m. Goat Tying (three age divisions) has been added this year. Also new are All-Around Cowboy/Cowgirl Awards sponsored by Lonsum Pine Farm/Myron Ang Family. An all-around cowboy/cowgirl award will be given to the Elementary, Junior and Senior age divisions.
 - **Horse Novice Classes** — walk-trot classes designed for 4-H youth ages 12–18 who have just started riding and showing. All walk-trot rules apply. The following horse events have novice divisions: English Pleasure, English Equitation, Horsemanship Pairs, Western Pleasure and Western Horsemanship.
- Other Changes**
- The **Bicycle Contest** will be held before county fair on Saturday, June 28, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center.
 - The **Presentation Contest** will be held one day only on Saturday, July 19, 9 a.m. at the Lancaster Extension Education Center (no presentations during county fair).
 - The county and state **Horticulture Contest** will be plant identification only. A new plant list along with a study guide can be found at <http://www.agronomy.unl.edu/newoutreach/youth-programs.html>. The new plant list contains plants that are commonly used or sold in Nebraska.
 - Due to construction of Amy Countryman Arena, there will be **no loading/unloading animals on the east side of Pavilion 1**. All loading/unloading animals (except for horses) will occur north of Pavilion 1. Animal check-in times have been staggered to ease congestion. See Fair Book for times.
 - **Bucket Calf** now has only two classes: Current-year bucket calf - Junior division (ages 8–10) and Current-year bucket calf - Intermediate division (ages 11–13).
 - The **Shooting Sports Contest** and **Llama Show** are on a break this year.

Volunteerism Creates Community Vitality

National Volunteer Week is April 27–May 3

Maureen Burson
UNL Extension Educator

We know warm weather is just around the corner when volunteer master gardeners join the extension educational team each spring. University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension Master Gardeners volunteer time to educational extension programs.

Master Gardener Sharon Stibal works at the Lincoln Children’s Zoo as part of her volunteer service. She says, “When I help maintain the landscape and answer questions from children and parents, I know thousands of people enjoy what they see and learn. It’s fun to keep up-to-date about the many aspects of horticulture from UNL experts and fellow Master Gardeners. It gets me outdoors and is a great way to relax.”

Master Gardeners are a part of the 72,231 Lincoln/Lancaster County citizens (27.6% of the population) who volunteered in 2006. The 1,293,008 hours, reported by 94 local non-profit agencies, are valued at \$18,412,427. Nationally, over \$60 billion is estimated to be contributed to the U.S. economy through volunteer service. In 2007, 60.8 million Americans (26.2% of the population) volunteered their time and talents.

In addition to documented volunteerism, friends and neighbors serve each other in a variety of ways. Providing a student transportation to



Volunteers such as Ron Suing (right) are the “Heart of 4-H.” He teaches rocketry at Clover College and is superintendent of 4-H Engineering areas at the Lancaster County Fair.

school, shoveling snow for a neighbor, picking up groceries for a disabled friend, or helping a peer understand algebra are all ways people volunteer. Volunteerism is a part of the American culture.

Volunteers Contribute to Extension’s Success

Lancaster County Extension trains and supports, as well as coordinates, the efforts of a variety of volunteers: Master Gardeners, 4-H leaders and superintendents, Family & Community



Each year UNL students share skill during their school breaks. During the January break, several UNL students helped build homes for hurricane victims in Hancock County, Mississippi.

Education (FCE) volunteers and Nutrition Education Program (NEP) volunteers. Last year, extension programs in Lancaster County benefitted for a total value of 1,897 volunteers investing 28,572 hours valued at \$536,296.

In addition, FCE and 4-H members often volunteer in community-related projects.

Youth are Serving Our Community

The majority of youth (59%) in the U.S. are involved in some type of service to their communities. Part of the 4-H pledge is, “I pledge my HANDS to greater service.” Lancaster County 4-H presents Community Service Awards to 4-H’ers who have completed the most hours of service (see 4-H Achievement Night results on page 9). Twenty hours of

community service are required in order to graduate from Lincoln public high schools.

Youth who are connected to the community through volunteerism are more likely to stay or return to their communities. They contribute substantially to the vitality of the community. According to the Bureau of Labor, youth are most likely to become involved because they were asked by organization members, school officials, relatives or friends.

College Students Contribute Through Community Service

Over 10,600 UNL students invested a total of 162,537 hours of volunteer service during 2006–07 school year. The UNL Student Involvement Office (on the Web at

http://si.unl.edu/service_learning) serves people in need by developing linkages between community partners and faculty, staff and students.

UNL students build and repair homes during college breaks, help low-income families prepare tax returns, provide birthday parties for residence of the People’s City Mission, mentor students at local community centers, donate blood, as well as a variety of other community service projects.

The 2007 President’s Higher Education Community Service Honor Roll includes UNL and Nebraska Wesleyan. Union College was honored with “High Distinction.”

Lincoln/Lancaster Volunteer Partners

Volunteer Partners matches volunteers’ interests with the needs of organizations in Lincoln and Lancaster County. It includes an average of 150 active volunteer opportunities listed by 220 local agencies. Ongoing opportunities include volunteer service days, youth volunteer clubs, Ride for Five - bus pass program, emergency volunteer program and court-mandated community service. The annual “volunteer-a-thon” is currently underway through April asking people to pledge 8 volunteer hours and/or donate \$8. For more information about these volunteer opportunities in Lincoln/Lancaster County, visit www.volunteerpayers.org or call 435-2100.

Inspire Youth to Volunteer — Action Steps for Parents and Educators

The experience of volunteering provides youth with the social and practical skills that can help them succeed in life, and get them engaged and more invested in their own communities. While youth today are involved in many extra-curricular activities such as sports and music, volunteerism can provide unique experiences and have many positive benefits for development. Here are some suggestions on how adults can encourage youth to volunteer.

Provide youth with information about volunteer opportunities. One of the top reasons youth do not volunteer is very simple, they do not have the information about opportunities. Parents and involved adults should help youth find opportunities in their own communities, schools, local organizations and churches. It might just take a few phone calls, visits to volunteer sites or even searches on the Internet to receive more information. Adults should also help youth consider their choices. This includes studying available information to make sure the activities are safe, lead by competent people, experiences offered are engaging and activities are well organized.

Invite/ask/encourage youth to volunteer. After finding information about volunteer opportunities, it is also important to invite the youth to volunteer or to directly communicate expectations for service to others.

Many youth report they did not think of volunteering because nobody ever asked them.

Help youth work through practical barriers. Go through the practical issues and logistics of how the child/youth could actually volunteer. Help them think about and work through issues such as scheduling, transportation, how to put in an application (if there is one) and other steps entailed in volunteering. For instance, the top reason youth do not volunteer is lack of time. Parents can help youth structure their time better and consider the amount of time they might want to commit to volunteer work.

Help youth find an opportunity that fits his or her interest/skills. Many youth drop out of volunteering because the activity is too hard, too easy or simply uninteresting. There are a host of opportunities that can match each person’s interests and skills. Consider whether the potential volunteer enjoys face-to-face interactions (e.g., mentoring) or solitary activities (e.g., community gardening). Also, try to help youth find volunteer opportunities that are age-appropriate.

Alert youth to the rewards of volunteering. While the essence of volunteering is really to provide service without rewards, there are some tangible benefits youth can get out of volunteering. Alert youth to these practical benefits. For instance,

point out to youth they can gain skills that might improve their marketability and volunteer activities enhance their resume. These benefits might make them more attractive to future employers or colleges. Many schools also have service learning components, so youth might actually get school credit for their services.

Be a role model. It goes without saying parents and other adults can encourage youth to volunteer by being volunteers themselves. Getting youth to volunteer is more effective if the person asking sets a good example. If the person asking is a volunteer or volunteered in the past, youth are more encouraged to volunteer.

Make it a family event. Parents are always looking for ways to have family time and to find activities the whole family can do together. Finding a volunteer activity, or even starting their own, could be a great opportunity for a family to be involved in something together. Perhaps a family can think of something to do each month to help others.

Source: UNL Extension NebGuide G1750, “Youth Volunteerism,” by Dr. Maria de Guzman, Adolescent Specialist. On the Web at <http://www.ianrpubs.unl.edu/sendIt/g1750.pdf>

FOR COMMUNITY SERVICE IDEAS

For “366 Community Service Ideas,” go to <http://lancaster.unl.edu/4h/serviceideas.shtml>

Volunteering Produces Health Benefits

Over the past two decades, a growing body of research indicates volunteering provides not just social benefits, but individual health benefits as well. This research has established a strong relationship between volunteering and health: those who volunteer have lower mortality rates, greater functional ability and lower rates of depression later in life than those who do not volunteer. A more comprehensive review of this research can be found in the full report, “The Health Benefits of Volunteering: A Review of Recent Research,” which can be downloaded at www.nationalservice.org

Older volunteers are most likely to receive greater health benefits from volunteering. These benefits include improved physical and mental health and greater life satisfaction. Volunteers must meet a “volunteering threshold” to receive significant health benefits. That is to say, volunteers must be engaged in a certain amount of volunteering in order to derive health benefits from the volunteer activities.

A number of studies demonstrate individuals who volunteer at an earlier point experience greater functional ability and better health outcomes later in life.

EXTENSION CALENDAR

All programs and events will be held at the Lancaster Extension Education Center unless otherwise noted.

March

- 24 **Family & Community Education (FCE) Council Meeting,**
Olive Garden, 6100 "O" Street.....1 p.m.
- 25 **Guardian/Conservator Training.....1:30–4:30 p.m.**
- 26 **4-H Horse Riding Fundamentals Clinic for 4-H'ers 5:30 & 8 p.m.**
- 27 **4-H Horse Riding Fundamentals Clinic for 4-H leaders.....6:30 p.m.**
- 27 **Livestock Selection & Nutrition Workshop, State Fair Park**
Open Beef Barn6:30 p.m.
- 27 **Family & Community Education (FCE) & Community Leader**
Training Lesson: "Developing Cultural Understanding and
Cultural Competence"1 p.m.
- 29 **Lancaster County 4-H Spring Rabbit Show, Lancaster Event Center**
Pavilion 3 - Exhibit Hall9 a.m.
- 29 **Child Care Conference..... 8 a.m.–3:30 p.m.**

April

- 1 **4-H Council Meeting, Valentino's, 70th & Van Dorn.....6 p.m.**
- 11 **Extension Board Meeting8 a.m.**
- 12 **Beginning Beekeeping Workshop - Day 2, Apiculture lab, Agricultural**
Research and Development Center near Mead 10 a.m.–2 p.m.
- 12 **4-H Jammie Jamboree.....9 a.m.**
- 12 **Kiwanis Carnival, Elliott Elementary School 7–9 p.m.**
- 13 **4-H Teen Council Meeting3 p.m.**
- 14 **4-H Public Service Announcement (PSA) Tapes Due for PSA Contest**
- 15 **Guardian/Conservator Training.....5:30–8:30 p.m.**
- 15 **ABC's for Good Health – 1st of 2-part series6–8:30 p.m.**
- 17 **Initial Commercial Pesticide Applicator Training Session9 a.m.**
- 17 **Parents Forever/Kids Talk About Divorce5:30–9:30 p.m.**
- 19 **4-H Scrapbooking Workshop 10 a.m.–12 Noon**
- 20 **4-H Speech Contest1 p.m.**
- 22 **ABC's for Good Health – 2nd of 2-part series6–8:30 p.m.**
- 22 **4-H Horse Level Testing, Lancaster Event Center Warm-up Arena 6:30 p.m.**
- 23 **Southeast District Family & Community Education (FCE)**
Meeting9:30 a.m.

Livestock Selection & Nutrition Workshop, March 27

Lancaster County 4-H is presenting a Livestock Selection and Nutrition Workshop on Thursday, March 27, 6:30 p.m. in the open beef barn at State Fair Park. Anyone may attend. Our speakers on nutrition management will be Tracy Coffland, Show Feed Specialist and Melissa McGee - Livestock Production Specialist, both from Land O Lakes Purina Feeds. We will also have species speakers representing beef, sheep, swine and goats who will talk about how to select the right animal for your goals, project and management strategies for your 4-H or FFA project. Please RSVP by March 24 by calling Deanna at 441-7180.

Clover College Instructors and Volunteers Needed

The 2008 4-H Clover College will be Tuesday, June 17–Friday, June 20 at the Lancaster Extension Education Center. Clover College is four days of fun-filled, hands-on workshops for youth ages 6 and up. If you have workshop topic ideas, or if you would like to teach a workshop or volunteer to help, please contact Tracy at 441-7180. All help is very much appreciated!

Pioneer Farm Family Award Applications Due May 1

The Knights of Ak-Sar-Ben and the Nebraska Association of Fair Managers will recognize Nebraska Pioneer Farm Families at the Lancaster County Fair. Titled "Nebraska Pioneer Farm Family Award," local recognition requires the land of a family in Lancaster County must have been owned by some member of the family for a century or more. Applications for this year's recognition are due by May 1. Applications can be obtained by contacting Deanna Karmazin at dkarmazin2@unl.edu or 441-7180.



Nebraska Preview JUNIOR OPEN HOUSE



Nebraska Preview is an opportunity for high school juniors and their families to preview exciting opportunities for success at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln. From 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., you will get an inside look at what to expect during your senior year college search — plus you will meet with current students, tour campus, eat lunch in a dining hall, explore academic choices and more! Fee to attend NEBRASKA Preview is \$10 per person.

Preview Dates:
April 4, April 14, April 18 & April 25

For more information or to register, see <http://admissions.unl.edu>



The University of Nebraska–Lincoln is an equal opportunity educator and employer with a comprehensive plan for diversity.



EXTENSION

Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

University of Nebraska–Lincoln Extension in Lancaster County

444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A
Lincoln, NE 68528-1507

(402) 441-7180

<http://lancaster.unl.edu>

E-mail: lancaster@unl.edu • Fax: 441-7148

Lancaster Extension Education Center
Conference Facilities
444 Cherrycreek Road, Lincoln



UNL Extension educational programs abide with the nondiscrimination policies of the University of Nebraska-Lincoln and the United States Department of Agriculture. We assure reasonable accommodation under the Americans with Disabilities Act; for assistance contact UNL Extension in Lancaster County at 441-7180.

Extension Educator & Unit Leader Gary C. Bergman

Extension Educators

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Maureen Burson
Tom Dorn
Alice Henneman
Don Janssen
Barb Ogg
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**Mail to: UNL Extension in Lancaster County
444 Cherrycreek Road, Suite A • Lincoln, Nebraska 68528-1507**

Spring Rabbit Show

Saturday, March 29, 9 a.m.

Lancaster Event Center, Pavilion 3 Exhibit Hall
84th & Havelock, Lincoln,
Registrations 7:30–9:00 a.m.

Trophies & ribbons will be awarded!
CLASSES: Fancy Rabbits,
Commercial Rabbits, Pet Class
and Pee Wee Class.
REGISTRATION FEES: \$2.50 per
rabbit or cavy, \$1 fur class,
\$1.50 Showmanship.
FREE CONTESTS: Rabbit Quiz &
Rabbit Breed ID



Open to all
youth 8–18

Excellent time
to learn and
practice your
showmanship!

All rabbits must be tattooed in the left ear
and brought in solid bottom cages.
**For more information, call Rodney
at 782-2186 or Teri at 441-7180**

Sponsored by Lancaster County 4-H Rabbit VIPs Committee

Meet the 2008 Lancaster County 4-H Council

Lancaster County 4-H Council represents the interests of youth, parents and leaders. 4-H Council is responsible for determining long- and short-term goals and policy for Lancaster County 4-H. They also raise funds by staffing a snack booth at the Lancaster County Fair. These funds help support 4-H programs, activities and scholarships. The following are members of this year's 4-H Council:



Jean
Pedersen
(President)



Kyle
Pedersen
(Vice President)



Stephenie
Doeschot
(Treasurer)



Marian
Hanigan
(Secretary)



Robin
Ambroz-
Hollman



Vicky Austin



Britta
Doeschot



Kirk
Gunnerson



Heather
Kennedy



Brad
Morgan



Ellen
Muehling



Paula
Peterson



Nathan
Smith



Mike Veburg



Brian Vogler



Coleen
Warner

4-H Teens Lead Lock-In

Each January, Lancaster County 4-H Teen Council presents an overnight Lock-In for 4th & 5th graders. Attendees are treated to a fun-filled event and Teen Council members gain valuable leadership skills. More than 80 4th and 5th graders attended and over 30 Teen Council members were involved in the planning, organizing and presenting of 12 hours of activities!

Here is a recap of the evening from a few of the teens:

A Successful Round-Up

Once again, Lancaster County 4-H Teen Council hosted a successful Lock-In. This year's theme was the Winter Round-Up, and 4th and 5th graders enjoyed creating their own brands and participating in a cowboy relay race. The children had a blast making their own cowboy hats, guitars and other crafts. Smiles abounded as teens led them in a variety of games throughout the night. It was exciting to see many of the younger members of Teen Council take larger leadership roles this year and learn how to put on a successful Lock-In. The increased number of attendees meant members had to make quick adjustments. The teens proved capable of handling the challenge and



4-H Teen Council members organized and led all Lock-In activities, including games, crafts and snacks.

the Lock-In ran smoothly. The Lock-In was fantastic thanks to the efforts of many amazing hard-working teens!

—Marian Hanigan
Vice-President

One of the Best Ever

I thought the Teen Council 4-H Lock-In was one of our best ever. In my five years on the council, the kids seem to have more and more fun each year. I think this is because we improve the event every year to make it more fun. The teens really illustrated their maturity throughout the entire night, and I could not be more proud to call myself a teen. All in all, the Lock-In was a huge success and I look forward to the future years.

—Brad Morgan

Youth Have Fun

The 4-H Lock-In is a great way for fourth and fifth graders to make new friends and explore the wonders of working and cooperating in games. The youth learn things while they have fun doing it. This year our theme was Winter Round-Up and they had healthy country food. They got to make a bunch of craft items such as hats they could take home if they wanted. At the end of all of the fun activities the youth finally settled down to rest with some movies. They were all tired when morning came. We helped them pack and get ready to go home. Then we went home and slept and slept, ready to start planning for next year!

—Erica Peterson

Kiwanis Karnival, April 12

The annual Kiwanis Karnival, a FREE family event is sponsored by the Lincoln Center Kiwanis. This year, it will be held Saturday, April 12, 7–9 p.m. at Elliott Elementary School, 225 S. 26 Street, Lincoln.

4-H members & their families and Elliott school students & their families are invited to share the fun!

The Karnival features carnival type games for the kids, bingo for adults, prizes, snacks, fun and fellowship. Lincoln Center Kiwanis has sponsored this event for over 50 years providing prizes and snacks. 4-H clubs are needed to provide carnival-type booths. For more information, call Lorene at 441-7180.

Can You Guess It?



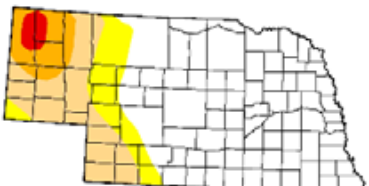
Did you guess it? Find out at
<http://lancaster.unl.edu>

Did you guess it from the March NEBLINE?
The answer was flaked tuna fish in a can.

U.S. Drought Monitor Map

As of March 11, Lancaster County was not in drought conditions.

Drought Conditions (Percent Area)							
	None	D0-D4	D5-D9	D10-D19	D20-D29	D30-D39	D40
Current	66.7	33.3	23.8	7.8	1.7	0.0	
Last Week (3/3/08 map)	66.7	33.3	15.7	7.8	1.7	0.0	
3 Months Ago (12/18/07 map)	66.7	33.3	15.9	7.8	1.7	0.0	
Start of Calendar Year (1/1/08 map)	66.7	33.3	15.9	7.8	1.7	0.0	
Start of Water Year (10/1/07 map)	70.9	29.1	13.6	7.0	1.7	0.0	
One Year Ago (3/11/07 map)	48.1	51.9	34.1	24.2	12.3	0.0	



Intensity:
D0 Abnormally Dry
D1 Drought - Moderate
D2 Drought - Severe
D3 Drought - Extreme
D4 Drought - Exceptional

For the most recent map, visit <http://www.drought.unl.edu/dm>

Source: National Drought Mitigation Center, University of Nebraska-Lincoln

2010 4-H Washington Group Forming Now!

Any Lancaster County youth age 14–19 can join 4-H Citizenship Washington Focus (CWF), a summer citizenship program which culminates in a nine-day, intensive trip to Washington D.C. in June 2010. CWF



delegates learn about the democratic process and their role as citizens. Get the inside scoop about how government really works from prominent guest speakers and from Senators and Congressman themselves. We will also take a few more days to discover the wonders of New York City. Youth who sign up now are able to start earning funds through organized fund-raising. A \$100 deposit is needed to reserve your spot. For more information, contact Deanna Karmazin at 441-7180.

Paws-On Dog Workshop, May 31

If you have an interest in learning about dogs or want to better your show skills, plan on attending the Lancaster County 4-H statewide dog clinic on Saturday, May 31, 10 a.m.–4 p.m. at the Lancaster Event Center, 84th and Havelock. This workshop will cover obedience, showmanship, agility, grooming, health care, careers in the small animal field and much more. Fee is \$5 per person and includes lunch. Anyone may attend. RSVP's are required by May 23 by calling Deanna Karmazin at 441-7180.